NINA...
MY NAME SOUNDS LIKE MAGIC WHEN THAT MAN IS THE ONE SAYING IT.
LIKE A SPELL THAT COMPRESSES MY CHEST AND KEEPS ME FROM BREATHING...

THINKING ABOUT HIM MAKES MY EMOTIONS GO HAYWIRE.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO!
AM I IN LOVE?!
IS THIS WHAT LOVE FEELS LIKE?
I KNOW THAT FALLING IN LOVE WITH HIM WOULD BE BAD.
...BUT...
THIS LOVE IS FORBIDDEN...!

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HIM NONSTOP.
MY HEART KEEPS THROBBING...
I WAS SHINING BRIGHTER THAN I EVER THOUGHT I COULD.
IN THOSE PHOTOS HE TOOK...
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?
IS THIS REALLY LOVE...?

I KNOW IT'S WRONG. WE COULD NEVER BE TOGETHER.
...BUT...
Sniiigh
HE COULD NEVER BE TOGETHER WITH A MIDDLE SCHOOLER LIKE ME..
HE'S AN ADULT ... AND HE'S SO AMA-ZING ...
WHY DON'T WE WORK TOGETHER ANOTHER TIME, NINA?
BUT STILL!
THAT MEANS HE WANTS TO SEE ME AGAIN! DOESN'T IT?
I HAVE A PHOTO-SHOOT TO GET TO TODAY!
SEE YOU LATER!
Ah!
Erk
Eep
OHHH!
I WANT TO SEE HIM AGAIN, TOO!!
ごろーん ごろーん
Bzuh...

HEY, NINA-CHAN! YOU'RE EARLY TODAY!
A HA HA, I AM?
CLICK
b-dump
b-dump
tremble
trmbl
Psh-click
Psh-click
click

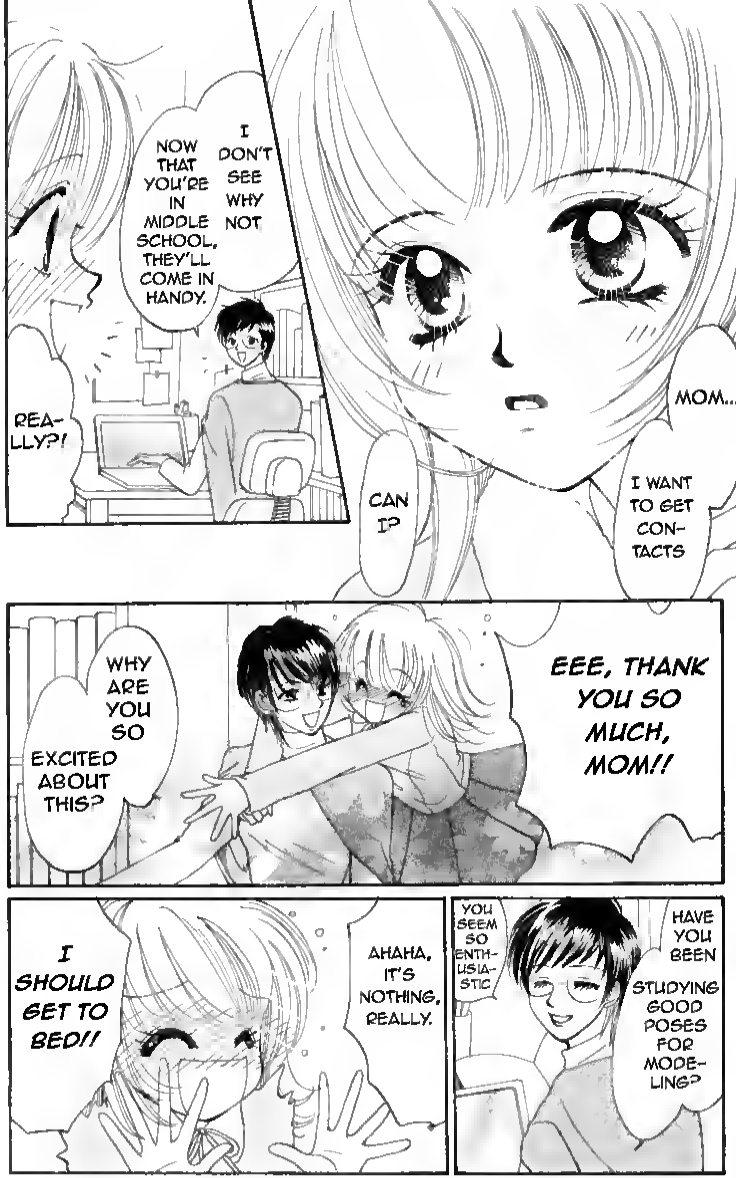
BANG BANG
I'M SO SO SO DUMB!! I SHOULD HAVE ASKED FOR HIS PHONE NUMBER OR AN ADDRESS WHERE I COULD WRITE HIM!!
WHAT IF I NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN?!
NOW I REMEMBER, SHE SAID THAT.
HE'S SUCH A PROLIFIC CAMERAMAN HE'S ALWAYS BUSY TAKING PICTURES
OH, YEAH...
GOOD MORNING, NINA-CHAN!
WE'RE SHOOTING MIZUKI-CHAN AND TOMO-CHAN FIRST.
So hurry and change and get your makeup done
OH, THAT'S RIGHT, WEREN'T YOU WONDERING IF YOUR FRIEND COULD COME AND WATCH A SHOOT?
YOU HAVE A SOLO SHOOT NEXT WEEK, SO WHY DON'T YOU BRING HER ALONG THEN?
A-ACTUALLY THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO ASK FIRST...
OR WAS THERE SOMETHING ELSE?
N-N-NO, THAT WAS IT!!
I WAS JUST TOO EMBARRASSED...
...TO ASK ABOUT SHINDOU-SAN.

EVEN JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE.
I WANT TO HEAR HIM SAY MY NAME AGAIN.
IF I COULD JUST SEE HIM AGAIN... THAT ALONE WOULD MAKE ME HAPPY.
HNN, MY EMOTIONS FEEL LIKE A ROLLER COASTER.
THEY KEEP GOING UP AND DOWN...
CLICK
WE'VE GOT SOME OTHER WORK TO DO NOW. SEE YOU NEXT TIME, THOUGH!
Let's hang out later!
HEY THERE, NINA. SEE YA LATER!

WOAH, THEY'RE SO CUTE!!
And stylish!!
AH, YEAH, THEY ARE
YOU TWO... ARE THOSE YOUR STREET CLOTHES?
They look just like the things we model!
THAT'S RIGHT... MODELS HAVE TO BE PEOPLE WITH EXTRAORDINARY SENSES OF STYLE...
...AND GOOD FASHION SENSE, TOO.
BUT WHEN IT COMES TO ME...

M-
MAYBE...
HNN..
HE WON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH ME.
NO.
I WANT TO SEE SHINDOU-SAN AGAIN MORE THAN ANYTHING, BUT...
GAH!!
JUST BECAUSE THE CLOTHES LOOK CUTE DOESN'T MEAN I'M CUTE AT ALL!

IT'S NOT FAAAIR! I WANT TO BE CUTE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE!
WHAT DO I DO...
HM?
O.o?
HEY, I THINK MAYBE...!!


I DON'T SEE WHY NOT
NOW THAT YOU'RE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, THEY'LL COME IN HANDY.
REA-LLY?!
MOM...
I WANT TO GET CON-TACTS
CAN I?
EEE, THANK YOU SO MUCH, MOM!!
WHY ARE YOU SO EXCITED ABOUT THIS?
HAVE YOU BEEN STUDYING GOOD POSES FOR MODE-LING?
YOU SEEM SO ENTH-USIA-STIC
AHAHA, IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.
I SHOULD GET TO BED!!

JUST IN CASE I EVER BUMP INTO HIM BY CHANCE, I WANT TO BE AS CUTE AS I CAN.
I JUST... WANT TO BE A LITTLE BIT CUTER, THAT'S ALL. JUST IN CASE I EVER SOMEHOW MEET HIM AGAIN...
I'M GONNA ACT LIKE MY LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!

...I WONDER IF HE'LL TELL ME THAT I'M CUTE?

NEXT TIME I SEE HIM...

shimmer
shine
glow
GASP
bwuh
G-GOOD MORNING, HIRO-TAN.
DO I LOOK WEIRD?!
NO.
IF YOU MAKE YOUR SKIRT 3 CENTI-METERS SHORTER...
..YOU'LL BE EVEN CUTER
REAL-LY?!

EEE, I'M SO GLAD I HAVE SUCH A FASHION-SAVVY FRIEND LIKE YOU, HIRO-TAN!
I was worried...
Up!
L... LIKE THIS?
SO,
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS IT WHO'S GOT YOU ALL WORKED UP?
.....

I DON'T REALLY KNOW ABOUT THAT... NOT YET.
chomp chomp
om nom
I KNEW IT WAS YOU, NINA! YOU'RE SUPER CUTE!!
Dazzling!
I HEARD THERE WAS A SUPER CUTE GIRL IN THIS CLASS, SO I CAME TO SEE!
Gulp
Ah, you're cute too Haruto!
...
WHU-?
IT'S THE TRUTH
S'NOT JUST THIS LOSER'S OPINION,
I'M FULL...
.....
clack

NINA, YOU DON'T HAVE AN APPETITE?
HUH? EH, NOT REALLY...
IF YOU SAY SO YOUR FACE LOOKS PALE, TOO
IF SOMETHING'S UP, YOU CAN TALK TO ME.
AH... THANKS...
ASAHI REALLY IS...
...A REALLY NICE, OBSERVANT GUY.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW, BUT THAT KINDNESS HAS REALLY HELPED ME OUT...
...AND YET...

...RIGHT NOW, I JUST WANT TO HEAR SHINDOU-SAN'S VOICE... AND SEE HIS SMILE.
EVEN THOUGH I KNOW WE COULD NEVER BE TOGETHER...
.....

bow
NICE TO MEET YOU.
THIS IS MY FRIEND HIRO-TAN
WORKING HARD, NINA?
ICHIGE-SAN!
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO! I'M ICHIGE, FROM AMUSE
YOU MEAN IT?!
BUT NINA, YOU'VE SURE GOTTEN PRETTY!
SORRY FOR NOT COMING AROUND MORE OFTEN, BUT I'VE BEEN SWAMPED WITH WORK.
OH, I SHOULD TELL YOU, YOUR CAMERA-MAN FOR TODAY IS...
ER—
WHAT, DID SOME-THING HAPPEN? HUH?

SLAM
BEEN A WHILE, NINA.
...AH...
B'dump
B'dump
B'dump
ARE YOU READY? LET'S GET STARTED.
AH!
R-RIGHT!

OH NO...
I WANTED TO TALK TO HIM SO BAD BUT NOW I CAN'T SAY A WORD!
HEY, JUST A SEC.
STEP
HUH? WHAT...
STEP
pat
I-I-I WH-WHAT IS...?!
B-dump
SHIN-DOU-SAN'S FINGERS ARE TOUCH-ING ME!!
B-dump
B-dump
HE'S SO CLOSE I CAN FEEL HIS BREATH...!!
B-dump

CLICK
MY HEAD IS SWIMMING...
THIS IS BAD! I NEED TO STAY FOCUSED AND DO MY JOB!!
ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE MUCH CUTER NOW.
CLICK
THAT'S RIGHT.
SHE LOOKS SO MUCH PRETTIER. IT'S LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING SHINING UNDERNEATH HER SKIN.
Click
HE GETS CLOSE TO THE SUBJECT IT'S NOT A MATTER OF WHAT CAMERA OR LENS HE HAS
HE CAN BRING OUT THINGS THE HAIR-STYLISTS AND MAKEUP CREW CAN'T.
THAT'S WHAT'S SO WONDERFUL ABOUT THIS CAMERAMAN
HIS TRICK IS MATCHING THE MODEL'S RHYTHM.
THAT'S WHY HE ALWAYS CATCHES THEM AT THEIR BEST

GREAT, NOW GO GET CHANGED FOR THE NEXT SET
OKAY!
YOU'RE REALLY CUTE TODAY
IT'S LIKE YOU GREW UP IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.
EEEE EEEE EEEE EEEE EEEE!
I MUST BE DREAMING! I WANT TO SCREAM AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS!!
ARE YOU INTO CAMERAS?
JUST THOUGHT I'D TAKE A LOOK.

NINA-CHAN, YOU LOOK GREAT!
YOU THINK SO?
I HAVE TO HURRY I WANT HIM TO SEE ME RIGHT NOW!
SHINDOU-SA ..

SHOVE!
DON'T YOU DARE TALK TO SHINDOU-SAN!!
ふっ!

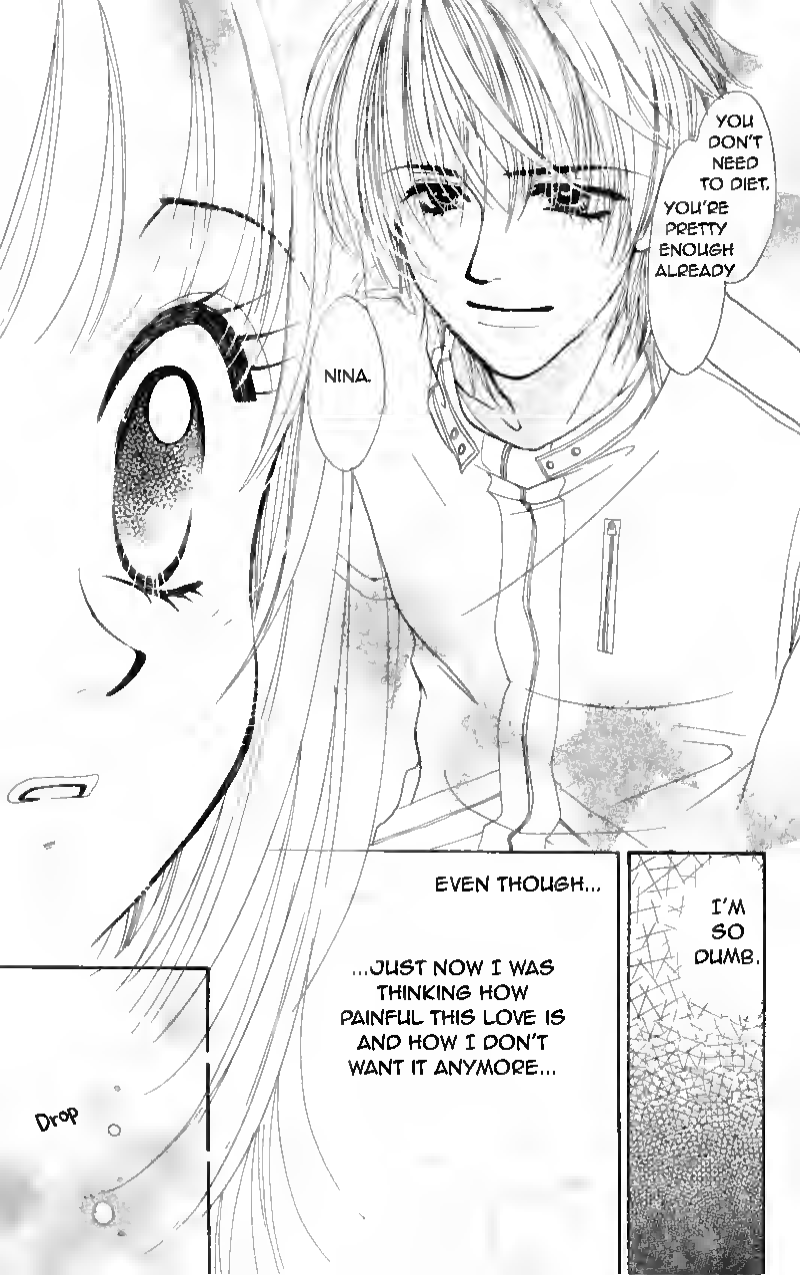
WH... WHAT AM I...
I... I'M GETTING ALL JEALOUS FOR NO REASON...
EH...?
NINA!!

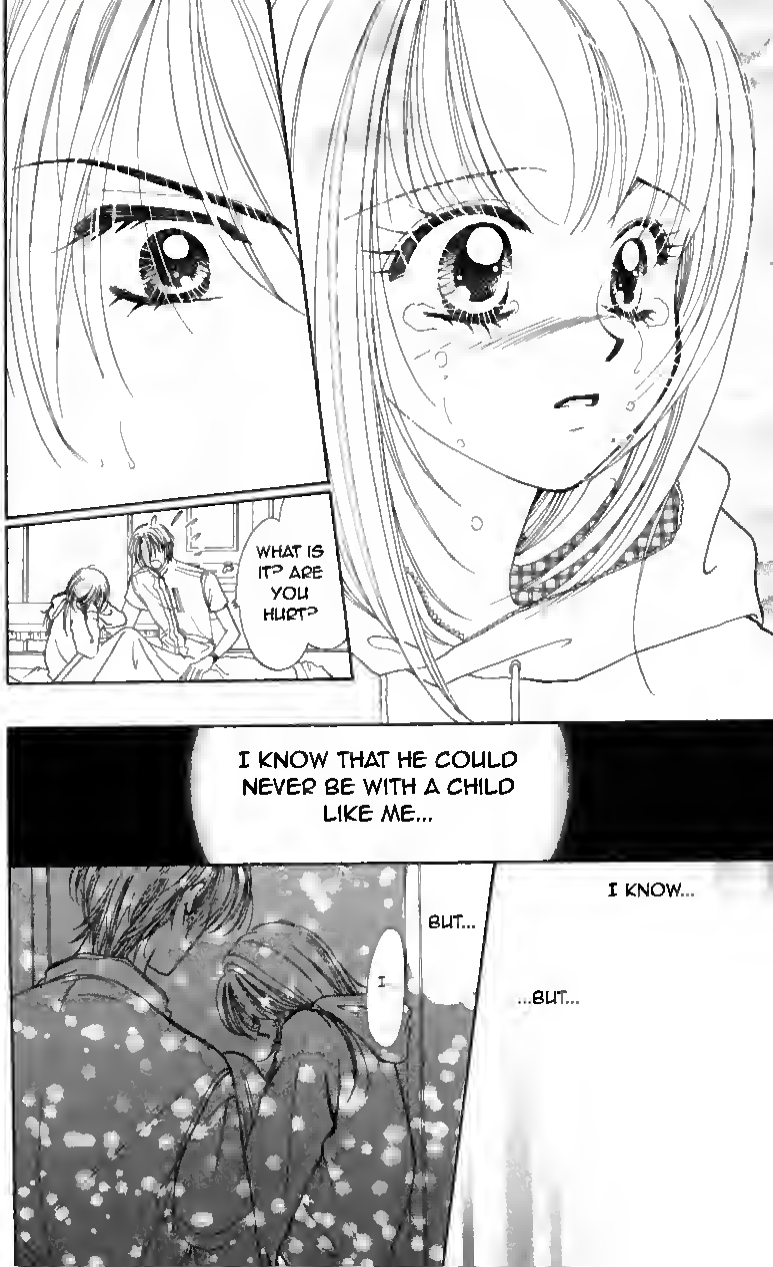
SMELLS GOOD...
IT MUST BE SHINDOU-SAN'S COLOGNE...
HIS HANDS ARE SO BIG AND WARM...
I CAN HEAR HIS HEART-BEAT THROUGH HIS SHIRT.
AM I... DREAM-ING RIGHT NOW?

HIRO-TAN!!
GASP
YOU OKAY, NINA? THEY SAID YOU FAINTED FROM ANEMIA
...?
I'M SORRY! I...
IT'S FINE. THAT GUY'S THE REASON YOU'VE BEEN TRYIN' TO BE PRETTIER, ISN'T HE.
I'M HEADED HOME. DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF.
EVEN THOUGH HIRO-TAN IS AN IMPORTANT FRIEND OF MINE...
I...
..I GOT JEALOUS, AND CRIED, AND YELLED AT HER.
WHAT AM I DOING?

I'M TURNING INTO A BAD PERSON...
I DON'T WANT THAT!!
IS LOVE SUPPOSED TO BE THIS PAINFUL?! IF IT IS THEN I... THEN I
Gasp!
SHIN-DOU-SAN!
CAN I COME IN?
Knock Knock
wipe
wipe
S...
SURE...
wipe wipe
AH...
Clack

WHAT DO I DO IF HE HATES ME NOW?!
B-dump
IT WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF WORK... IS HE MAD?!
B-dump
B-dump
WH-WHAT DO I DO? WHAT DOES HE THINK OF EARLIER?
huh?!
WHICH DO YOU WANT?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT KIND OF SNACKS GIRLS LIKE. I PROBABLY LOOKED LIKE A MORON JUST STANDING THERE AT THE CONVENIENCE STORE TRYING TO PICK.
WELL, IN ANY CASE, YOU NEED TO EAT SOMETHING. YOU NEED YOUR STRENGTH TO KEEP MODELING


YOU DON'T NEED TO DIET. YOU'RE PRETTY ENOUGH ALREADY
NINA.
EVEN THOUGH...
...JUST NOW I WAS THINKING HOW PAINFUL THIS LOVE IS AND HOW I DON'T WANT IT ANYMORE...
I'M SO DUMB.
Drop


WHAT IS IT? ARE YOU HURT?
I KNOW THAT HE COULD NEVER BE WITH A CHILD LIKE ME...
I KNOW...
BUT...
I
...BUT...

I LOVE YOU!!
WHAT DO I DO?
I LOVE YOU, SHINDOU-SAN!!
HOW DO I MAKE THESE FEELINGS GO AWAY?!

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By Yasue Imai

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Cinderella Collection